

BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL

Argo

SEPT 2011

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL

VOLUME XLIV—EXTRACURRICULAR FAIR SPECIAL

News Tidbits

>>Death-row inmates in Texas can no longer request special last meals before they die, all because one inmate ordered two chicken fried steaks, a triple-meat bacon cheeseburger, a cheese omelet, large bowl of fried okra, 3 fajitas and a pound of barbecue with a half-loaf of white bread on the side—and did not eat any of it.

>>The NASA satellite UARS, which weighed nearly six tons and was approximately the size of a bus, recently crashed at an unknown site. NASA scientists estimate that the debris from the crash is somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, but they require further data to pinpoint the exact location.

>>A Republican group at the University of California, Berkeley recently posted pricing-plans for an "Increase Diversity" bake sale on Facebook. The only caveat? "White/Caucasian," "Black/African-American," and "Native American" pastries are the items on the menu, priced at 2 dollars, seventy cents, and a quarter, respectively. The Facebook post was in response to a proposed bill that would allow Californian Universities to consider ethnicity in the admissions process.

>>Scientists at the University of California, Berkeley have made a major advancement in the practice of mind reading. They have begun to reconstruct YouTube videos from brain scans of test subjects who had just viewed them. The scientists would place subjects in an MRI while they were viewing the video, observing how their brains would process the clip. Then, they could effectively run the recorded brain activity backward, in attempts to recreate what the viewer saw.

>>Two descendants of the adventurers Lewis and Clark returned a canoe to the native Chinook Indians, more than two centuries after the duo had stolen one from the tribe. The descendants presented the tribe with a 36-foot long replica of the canoe on Saturday, September 24th.



THECOLLECTORSOFCOM

EXPLORING THE FINAL FRONTIER...BLIND?

Space Blindness

News

BY ALEC MACNEIL, II
NEWS EDITOR

Astronauts that have spent several months aboard the International Space Station have been found to have eroded vision, which has NASA concerned that their spacemen could eventually lose all eyesight after trips that last several years.

Though there have yet to be any incidents of actual blindness, NASA has hired researchers to begin studying the issue, as well as providing the afflicted astronauts with pairs of eyeglasses to enable them to continue their work on the Space Station for the time being.

In a recent survey of 300 NASA astronauts, the gradual blurring of eyesight has affected almost 30 percent of astronauts in two-week shuttle expeditions, and 60 percent of those who have completed six month operations on the space station. Although a

follow-up to this survey reveals that the eyesight of the astronauts returns after they have spent time on earth, there has been one case of "visual acuity not [returning] to baseline", according to Dr. Richard Williams, the Chief Health and Medical Officer at NASA. Even though it will be many years before a space shuttle capable of making a three-year long journey to Mars can even be created, scientists have only been concerned with exposure to cosmic radiation and the loss of bone mass due to microgravity, not blindness.

NASA scientists began to study the occurrence of blindness more vigorously when an anonymous astronaut returned from space was very open about the problems he was experiencing, which encouraged tentative astronauts to step forward and detail their own struggles.

Garret Reisman, a former astronaut who spent 3 months aboard

the International Space Station, began to notice a marginal decrease in his vision towards the end of his mission. He experienced much more powerful problems when in 2010, a carbon dioxide spike in the cabin of the shuttle preceded severe headaches and more extreme blurring of vision than he had experienced prior. Reisman returned back to normal after spending two full days back on Earth, except that his vision was slightly less acute.

The most up to date research had been centered on seven individual astronauts who have shown symptoms similar to Reisman's, one of whom reported vision issues that prevented him from identifying the Earth from the space shuttle. Another was coerced by such poor vision that he forsaken his own prescription glasses in favor of new ones that could be adjusted in accordance to his differing impairments of vision.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Death Penalty's Red Flag

News

BY ROBERT FITZPATRICK, I
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On September 21, 2011 Troy Davis was executed after being on death row for the past twenty-two years. The death penalty has been a huge controversial issue, deepening the divide between conservatives and liberals for decades. After the September 20th execution of Troy Davis, however, Americans from both major parties have been questioning the death penalty and whether or not it is putting innocent men to death.

Most people in favor of the death penalty think that capital punishment should only be implemented when a case is beyond a shadow of a doubt. Critics of the Davis case say that not only was there a shadow of doubt, but that the conviction of Davis was dubious at best. Davis even had many sup-

porters of his liberation, the most notable among them being President Jimmy Carter, Al Sharpton, and Pope Benedict XVI. According to Georgia and the Supreme Court, their appeals were not enough to contend with the evidence against him.

The crime is reported as such: a security guard, Mark MacPhail, was on duty at a Savannah, Georgia Burger King. When MacPhail went to address an assault in a nearby parking lot, Troy Davis allegedly shot and killed him. Though Georgia courts were convinced that this was the true version of the story, there was no physical evidence or murder weapon found to implicate Davis. In fact, the case was based on eye witness accounts of the crime, and almost nothing else. Eye witness accounts are already deemed only semi-reliable as traumatic events can usually be remembered incor-

rectly. In this case, the eye witness accounts were incredibly unreliable. Seven out of the nine eye witnesses recanted their statements, saying that they were either pressured or forced to sign statements implicating Davis. Interestingly enough, one of the two witnesses that did not recant was Sylvester Coles, the primary alternative suspect to Troy Davis.

Many are asking how a man could be convicted and executed based on eye witness accounts, when almost all of those witnesses admitted that they incorrectly testified. People are answering this question by saying that the conviction of Davis was based more on his race than the accounts of witnesses. An old debate has been resurfaced—whether the disproportionate amount of blacks and whites on death row is coincidence or prejudice.

You Decide!

Introducing the various sections of the Argo

NEWS

This section is for those who like the cold, hard facts. The no-nonsense News section is where our readers learn about what's going on in the world around them, both locally and globally.

FORUM

The Forum section is for those of us wanting to share not only what happened, but also what they—and perhaps we—should feel about it. Here, outspokenness is appreciated and encouraged. We want to know what students think about the issues that affect our lives.

A&E

The writers for Arts and Entertainment are brave souls involved with conducting their own research. They go to various movies, plays, or local restaurants and review them. Writers can recommend great finds to our readers, or discourage them from making the same mistakes they did.

SCI & TECH

If you think that genetic engineering and cutting-edge technological advances are interesting, then you can find a home in the Science & Technology section. Discoveries are constantly being made faster than most of us can keep up with, and Sci-tech helps us with that.

SPORTS

For the athletically-inclined, or maybe just the inclined-to-watch-athletics, Sports gets the latest scoop on national sports and Wolfpack news. Write for Sports if you like sports, bro.

PHOTO

The Photo section is our on-call staff that can take and edit pictures for breaking news and local events. If you dabble in Lightroom or Photoshop and refuse to set a non-DSLR photo as your profile picture, we want you.

LAYOUT

Vector art, typography, Adobe, print and graphic design: if any of the preceding words made you giddy, then Layout is your ultimate creative outlet. The Layout section takes text and creates something beautiful from it.

COPY

Copy is in charge of editing the articles for grammar and fact checking. If you self-google things like "all right or alright", you'd love being a Copy Editor. It's "all right", by the way.

THE ARGO

Editor's Note

Dear Argo readers,

To our first time readers: Congratulations. By picking up this special edition of the Argo, you've already taken a step in the right direction. What you'll find in these two thin sheets of paper is the culmination of the ink, sweat, and tears of student writers, designers, photographers, and food-runners alike. We hope this mini-issue will give you an idea of what's in store: eye-opening articles and awe-inspiring black and white photos. The Argo is so enthralling, you won't even be able to put it down—but if you get in trouble for reading—

SPACE BLINDNESS

Continued from page 1

The cases of those seven individuals were reviewed last February by a conference of 75 different scientists and doctors from a varied range of fields. The conclusion was that the

ing this in class, you're on your own. Also the Argo is usually not four pages, but an incredible sixteen. I know. Pretty legit. What we hope to make you guys realize over your years at BLS is that the Argo is one of our school's best outlets for student reporting and opinions. If you'd love to make your voice heard, then we'd love to have you.

To our seniors: "12" for R? 12 really guys?

To everyone else: Unfortunately this issue does not contain a crossword puzzle, but hopefully that's not the reason why

condition, while being unable to "cause blindness near term", was also unknown for having a long term effect, for the simple fact that no one has been in space long enough to demonstrate such a case.

NASA has asked for further re-

you picked up this issue. Every other issue will have a crossword puzzle, however, and that will be a completely valid excuse for not paying attention in class. Remember kids, Argo cares.

Oh, and before we forget to introduce ourselves, the 'we' in this editor's note consists of Bobby Fitzpatrick and Dominick Zheng. Together, we're Dobby Fitzheng aka Bombinick Zitzpatrick aka your editors-in-chief for Argo 2011-2012. We look forward to watching the sun rise.

By Divine Right,
Bobby and Dominick

search and for better means of testing the crews while in space. In addition, closer examination will be made towards the behaviors and backgrounds of the astronauts, in attempts to find commonalities that determine the afflicted and the healthy.

The Internet: A Study Arts & Entertainment (A&E)

BY GERALDINE VITTINI, II
A&E EDITOR

A curious thing happens when teenagers have too much free time on their hands and when post-pubescent adults realize that they have little to no responsibilities. They feel oddly confined to their desks, with their super high-tech computing devices (or a 10-year-old boulder with a black and white screen and keyboard filled with crumbs, if you are me). They open up their browsers, and stare slack-jawed at the endless possibilities of information and bad music that is on the worldwide web. Do you know how many hours the average teenager spends on the computer, searching, chatting, or gazing in rapt attention to piano playing cats? Millions of hands were "carpal tunnel'd" into stumps that summer on YouTube

alone.

Also, there is something called Tumblr which has the auspicious ability to turn healthy, functioning members of society into pale, sweaty vampires that only come out when they smell fast food. Then, there is the all-powerful, all-knowing Sage Master that is Google. During the school year, you might not have run into so many sticky situations because

you were too busy studying your brains out to have the time to attempt that home flamethrower and catapult tutorial you found on YouTube. You might have never needed to google "how do you heal first degree burns with common household items" or "how do you make a tourniquet."



ABOVE: ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF THE INTERNET.

Now, you may rest assured that if you ever run into these situations, Google will be there to help. Because Google, like YouTube, Yahoo! Answers, Facebook and Tumblr, are like fairy godmothers, but you know, minus the pastels, the sparkle, good intentions and the wand.

Boston Latin School *Argo*

Boston Latin School *Argo*

2011-2012 Academic Year

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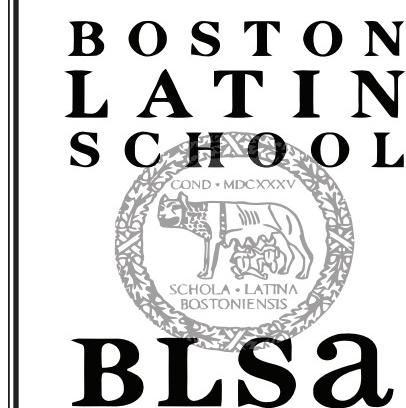
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MISSION STATEMENT
Petere Veritatem

The Argo strives, in accordance with the highest standards of journalism, to inform and inspire its readers, to provide a forum for constructive debate, and to foster understanding among all members of the Boston Latin School community.

**1994 First Place
New England
Scholastic Press
Association
Competition**

**1996 New England
Scholastic Press
Association
Superior
Achievement Award**

**1998 New England
Scholastic Press
Association
Superior
Achievement Award**
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Superior Achievement
Award**
**1996 Third Place
Suffolk University
High School
Journalism
Competition**

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Excellence in Sports Writing**

**2007 Honorable Mention
Greater Boston High School
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Excellence in News Writing**

**2011 Honorable Mention
Suffolk University High School
Journalism Competition
Excellence in Forum Writing**

**ARGO
BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL
78 AVENUE LOUIS PASTEUR
BOSTON, MA 02115**

THE ARGO

Cats vs. Dogs! Which are the Better Furries?

Forum



WWW.DAILYPICTURESANDFLICKS.COM

Cats, of Course

BY MAYA ALLEGRO, I
ASSISTANT FORUM EDITOR

Nothing has taken the internet by storm quite like the subject of this article: cats. You can barely navigate YouTube without stumbling upon some ball of fur doing something comical. There are cats fighting (and beating) crocodiles; cats in pet washes; cats on roombas; and kittens simply being absurdly adorable. The list goes on and on. It is a phenomenon that can most obviously be associated with society's subconscious realization of the superiority of felines.

Strong and silent, cats exude a confidence supermodels would kill for, a cunning worth following into battle, and an elegance the equivalent of Coco Chanel on steroids. As if these attributes weren't enough, what really sets them apart is their independence. You don't have to walk them or feed them—they eat those elementary tasks for breakfast, along with nails and raw eggs. And you never have to be disturbed by a desperate plea for attention so characteristic of some other insecure, four-legged creatures.

Rather than being a pet that requires constant attention and fawning over, a cat will come and go as he pleases, without depending on the owner. Our furry feline friends can use the earth's gravity to figure out where they are and find their way home. Because of this, cats can journey long distances and still find their way back, unlike a dog that is more likely to follow home someone wearing the same hat as its owner.

Some may whine that they're too sneaky, or too apathetic, or too violent. Well yes, it's a fact of life: cats bite. But let's face it. It was your fault. You have a deep inner evil. Perhaps you can fool your loved ones, but fool a cat? You deserve every scrape.

Another supposed 'fault' is that you can't train cats. But why is that a bad thing? Because cats don't go against their every animal instinct for a treat? As a general rule, humans and dog lovers alike strive to control. A cat is the ultimate challenge, the final frontier of Mother Nature—a creature who will blink nonchalantly in the face of someone trying to dominate them, and then realize that he is a cat, and too good for you. So I suppose it's no surprise that a dog lover chooses to cuddle with the animal that will sit, fetch and stay just because you say so. It seems the only thing dogs don't do on command is shut the heck up.

Perhaps the car scene of *Meet the Parents* summed it up best: "Cats make you work for their affection, they don't sell out the way dogs do." A cat would never throw around something as serious as love. When a cat takes a liking to you, it is the equivalent of a raving Simon Cowell review: a true sentiment to your inner beauty and exceptional character, not like some Paula Abdul throwaway compliment that is bestowed on both serial killers and saints alike. After putting up with the biting, the scratching, and the ruined furniture, once you have your cat's love, he will never leave your side, not to mention lay more dead birds than you could possibly dream of at your feet.

Yes, they are smarter than you. Yes, they are braver than you. Yes, the only thing keeping them from world domination is their lack of opposable thumbs. Get over it. It's not like an entire civilization worshipped them or anything. And do you know what that same civilization thought of dogs? Nothing. They ate them.

Definitely the Dogs

BY NAOMI LEONARD, I
FORUM EDITOR

Cats vs. Dogs is an age old debate, although I can't see why. Cats might be cute, but they can't provide the type of companionship that dogs can. Dogs will play with you for hours and then rescue you from a burning building. Cats will roll over for you and then claw your hand if you don't pet their tummies exactly the way they want you to. They might also smother you in your sleep.

When describing dogs, one uses words like friendly and loyal. When describing cats, one uses words like intelligent and independent. A dog is a loving pet and a cat is more like a roommate. Cats will never admit that they're dependent on you. Dogs, on the other hand, will do all they can to get your attention and tell you how important you are to them. Dogs wholeheartedly think their owner is the best person in the world. A favorite tee-shirt reads, "I am striving to be the person my dog thinks I am."

Dogs will quickly love you unconditionally. Cats may eventually decide they like a person, but as far as I can see, this essentially just amounts to them tolerating a certain person longer than they would others. I asked two devoted cat-lovers if the following traits applied to their cats: lack of guilt, self-centeredness, no change in behavior after punishment, inability to control impulses, and no sense of responsibility. They both checked off every single one. They both inadvertently diagnosed their beloved pets as sociopaths.

Cats can get away with far more than any domesticated dog could dream of. See, if a dog bites a human, he gets put down. If a cat bites a human, he's "just being a cat." If you visit someone's house and ask if their dog bites, when they say no they mean no. It is safe to pet them. If you ask someone if their cat scratches they may say no, but what they really mean is sometimes. Be careful.

Society finds doggy personalities more appealing than kitty personalities. Think of all the movies made about dogs! If you ask a stranger to name any movie starring a cat off the top of their head, they *might* be able to name a few; maybe *The Aristocats*, *Homeward Bound*, and the cartoon version of *Oliver*. Well, two out of three of these feature more dogs than cats, and *The Aristocats* can easily be canceled out by *Lady and the Tramp*, and completely overridden by *101 Dalmatians*. The list of movies starring a dog can go on and on, especially if you include every *Airbud* sequel.

Besides, recent studies have shown that dogs can do something cats cannot: read human emotions. Human beings show most of their emotion on the right side of their face. Scientists find that dogs tend to tilt their heads to the left when encountered with a human face. They do not do this when presented with any other object or animal—just humans. So, when a dog curls up next to you when you're crying, it does so out of sympathy. When a cat does so, it's just out of boredom.

Loving a cat is understandable, but I feel as if cat owners only think cats are better because they don't own a dog. They can make the case that dogs are too needy; that regular walks and baths are exhausting. But if they owned a dog they would realize that most of the time owner is happy to do it. When an animal spends most of their energy pleasing you, it doesn't really feel draining to give them what they want. To summarize: dogs are sweet, and cats are questionable.

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THE ARGO

Football Starts 3-0...Wait, What?

Sports

BY ISAAC BUCK, I
SPORTS EDITOR

Yes folks, you read it right. And no, I'm not talking about the Patriots. With wins over North Quincy and Stoneham, Boston Latin Football has started the season 2-0 for the first time since 2004, immediately sparking chants of "We undefeated!" in the locker room after the Stoneham game. But it wasn't all a walk in the park. Two games, and two hard fought wins.

In game 1, Latin led 7-6 late in the game thanks to a run by Jhalen Bien-Aime (II) and the point after (which, in high school games, are not taken for granted), while North Quincy missed the point after on their touchdown. But despite having played a stifling defense for the entire game, the Wolfpack was left praying that North Quincy would miss their audacious 47-yard field goal attempt. By the grace of the Latin gods, the attempt fell just short as football band broke out into the proud BLS fight song. Putting aside our questions as to how North Quincy could nearly hit a 47-yard field goal and yet miss a point after, let the celebrations begin because given our unfortunate football history, this would surely be one of the few wins of the season. And there was Stoneham, right on schedule, bringing us back to earth with a humiliating 20-0 first half lead.

Enter the camera crew and cue the Hollywood ending. After a rousing halftime speech by Coach McDonough, Latin bounded out of the locker room;

ready to show Stoneham that we at the oldest school in America are no longer pushovers. But it seemed that the efforts of McDonough were for naught as Stoneham returned the ensuing kickoff for a touchdown and a 26-point lead. With the determined offensive line of Zachary Grasso (I), Seth Occeus (I), Michael McKie (I), Sean Curry (I), and Connor Pease (II), as well as monster tight end Rudolph Lewis (I) blocking for an unstoppable corps of running backs, including Bien-Aime, David Barry (I), James Bender (Capt., I), and Michael Lenane (I), the Wolfpack clawed its way back into the game. With quarterback Calan Cahill (II) orchestrating this offense, Stoneham saw their lead shrink rapidly. But not only was there outstanding play on the offensive side of the ball, there was also inspired defense being played. Led by the ball-hawk David Hernandez (I), who had a second half pick, the Latin D shut up shop and pitched a shutout for the rest of the game.

Latin is lucky enough to have leaders off the field besides those on it. To go along with our outstanding

Wolfie and cheerleading team, players like Jonathan Stratton (I) pumped up



HALLINAN, READY TO RETURN TO HIS WORK-HORSE WAYS.

responded that when it comes down to it, you have to "bro hard or bro home." We'll be sure to remember that, Dave.

And don't write this streak off as luck or lack of competition or any other weak excuse. Latin is still awaiting the return of two elite players; Hallinan is now back from his shoulder injury and Miles Wright (II) is soon to return as well. As Latin opens the conference part of their schedule, it is up to you, students of this fine institution, to make sure that the stands at every home game are packed and deafening. The upcoming home games are: 10/7 vs. Concord-Carlisle at 6:30, 11/4 vs. Westford at 6:30, 11/11 vs. Weston at 6, and of course the English game on Thanksgiving Day at 10. All of the games are at White Stadium except for the Thanksgiving game, which is at Harvard Stadium. And of course, for updates or to check in with any of your other favorite BLS sports teams, visit bls.org and go to the athletic section under student life.

This past Saturday, after having their game moved from White Stadium to Madison Park due to weather issues, your very own Wolfpack annihilated Newton South High School by a score of 26-6. Now off to an even more unbelievable 3-0 start, we have to wonder if they are the real deal. And behind such an unbelievable corps of seniors and a remarkable cast of underclassmen, we have to believe that they are. And now the entire Latin community can speak with pride about our outstanding football team. Lets go Wolfpack!

Portal Through History

Science & Technology

BY JAKE ZHANG, II
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EDITOR

Motion pictures have long been regarded as primary sources of history, as they reflect the attitudes and feelings of their respective time periods. In *The Great Dictator*, Charlie Chaplin lampooned a certain German chancellor right before WWII (finally putting his strikingly similar moustache to good use). The radioactive monster-lizard in *Godzilla* crushing Tokyo underfoot mirrored post-WWII fears of atomic weapons. Given the long history of motion pictures, from the silent-film era to 3D movies of the present, it makes sense that films would be a reliable indicator of society. But more recently, videogames have been making the same impact. While the film industry struggles with rising ticket prices and

recycled plots, the videogame industry has blossomed into a multi-billion dollar enterprise in the last decade. It makes sense that videogames will be the new social indicator, and that's exactly what it is.

Interestingly enough, the videogame boom in the United States coincided with 9/11 and the subsequent War on Terrorism. During the Iraq War, videogames, like movies, avoided plots centered on the ongoing war--and those that didn't generally sold poorly. Sour public opinion also inspired game developers to pursue games set in conflicts with more glorious circumstances, like WWII. This *improve* has, to a degree, changed recently, with the reboot of both Call of Duty 4 and Medal of Honor which take place in the Middle East and Afghanistan, respectively. Roles

have swapped as videogames became an unexpected recruiting tool for militaries, reflecting a general appreciation and need for armed forces. Videogame plots changed with public fears as well. After the North Korean missile fiasco, Homefront predicted a pan-Asian invasion of the United States. Modern Warfare also imagined a Russian attack on New York. Such games reflect our irrational fears in a post-9/11 world through a medium u n r i - *players to build* valed by a n y h

which the sequel Portal 2

transverse Although

logical reasoning

player can

analyze.

seed through

players reasoning

2 Portal Portal 2

players

source of media.

While videogames have become increasingly more realistic, immersive, and often violent, the industry has offered recent alternatives to the genre. Successful games like Little Big Planet and the long over-due Minecraft represent a distinct divergence from militaristic (and graphic) games of the past. These sandbox-style games allow players to build their own levels or games, requiring players to be creative, imaginative, and constructive. Portal and its recent sequel Portal 2 did away with the military genre entirely, replacing weapons with a

"Portal Gun" that creates *entirely* portals through which the player can transverse.

Although not entirely educational, some schools are weighing the benefits of the game to improve logical reasoning and analysis.

